into a tailspin

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by magneticrats

Summary

One would be so curious to wonder if Gale Cleven felt even half of what Austin felt for Callum for Egan. Hopefully he did, because Austin was sure it was written all over his face every time the camera rolled.

Notes

baby's first caustin fic!! this has been sitting inside of me for some time, thanks to the mutuals on tumblr who encouraged it!

typical rpf disclaimer, these are fictionalized versions of real people, I am using their scenarios for indulgent fic, etc. if you somehow ended up here on an archive locked fic and you know the people mentioned? get outta here.

See the end of the work for more notes

“Can I be totally ridiculous for a second?”

Austin looks up from the script that he has spread out the table in front of him, and smiles easily at Callum, “Sure you can.”

They’re in between takes while the crew sets up for the next shot. The day hasn’t stretched into anything unbearable yet, so everyone is in relatively good spirits. Doesn’t hurt that it’s Friday either, so almost everyone has the weekend ahead of them to look forward to.

“Let’s go on a little adventure this weekend,” Callum sits himself across from Austin.

Austin eyes Callum with a healthy dose of suspicion, his costume uniform unbuttoned and hair a askew until the stylists put it back into place before they shoot the next scene. He looks roguishly handsome, and he could probably talk Austin into anything.

“An adventure,” Austin hums thoughtfully.

“Yah. Like, usually we go to my place, we hang out, we get food, run lines, play cards, it’s all good, yah?” Callum lists off their usual weekend itinerary as he sits back in the chair, he long legs most definitely spread wide below the table. Austin tries not to think about it as Callum continues on, “But, we can do most of that somewhere else, right? Get out of the city for a day, see some sights.”

“Where did you have in mind?” Austin asks.

“Come on, I’m not gonna spoil it,” Callum grins, “Where’s the fun in that?”

“So it’s an adventure *and* a surprise now?” Austin checks.

Callum’s smile just turns brighter.

Austin is skeptical, generally he likes knowing plans, but he trusts Callum enough to surrender to it. They hadn’t known each other long in the grand scheme of things, but they had been quick to discover they were on a similar wavelength. From the first voice note Austin got from Callum, and the way they clicked, he knew that he couldn’t ask for a better costar. Colleague. Work friend. Austin tried to remind himself that’s what the thing he felt between them was. They were both committed to their craft. Nothing more, surely.

Still, whatever it was, it made it all too easy to say yes.

⁓ ✈ ⁓ ✈ ⁓ ✈

It's early when Callum pulls up outside Austin's rental to pick him up. The light is still blue through the clouds, and it feels like any other day before they would normally head to set.

"You know, we could be sleeping in right now," Austin remarks with a yawn as he pulls himself into the passenger seat of the vehicle. He throws his bag into the rear seat, on the floor since Golo is spread across most of the actual seats. The dog lifts his head in acknowledgement before going right back to sleep.

Callum told him they could drive back that evening, but he also said the drive was around five hours, so Austin brought a change of clothes and a toothbrush because he doubted either of them would feel like driving back when they didn't have to.

"Could be," Callum agrees solemnly, wearing a ball cap like Austin, but his is pulled on backwards over his sleep mussed curls that peak out at the edges, "Let's go get some coffee."

Austin stays in the car with Golo when Callum pulls up outside of a small little bakery, its lights warm and glowing—a break from the blues and greys. Callum's back in no time and Austin gladly takes the latte that he is handed, and a small wax paper bag with a pastry inside.

"Another surprise, huh?" Austin asks as he takes a bite. Whatever it was, it was delicious.

Callum just laughs, "I'm full of em."

Austin watches Callum's profile against the morning light, and smiles a little to himself, *Oh, I don't doubt it* .

It still feels as though they're both waking up, so there's not much to be said for conversation as Callum navigates the car in the right direction out of the city.

Austin lets the coffee work into his system, and starts to feel a bit more alive as the scenery turns to sprawling green fields, dotted with an idyllic stone fence here and there, all covered with a blanket of thick fog.

The English countryside was so different than anything Austin had grown up with, but it offered something soft and nostalgic within it despite that. He liked the way the air felt heavy with moisture before it rained, and the way the sun felt extra sweet when it decided to make an appearance. There were more days like that as they kept filming, too, as they inched from spring and into the summer months.

“Do you want to turn on some music?” Callum asks him after awhile.

“Sure, I can do that,” Austin swipes into his phone, already connected to Callum’s car, and pulls up a playlist they’d both been adding to since they started filming. It’s full of jazz and swing spanning from the 1920s-60s. It was most of what they listened to when they were together.

Ella Fitzgerald’s voice fills the car speakers, and Austin lets the lofty notes sink right in his body alongside the caffeine.

“Mmm,” Callum hums, and there’s a smile on his face as he taps his fingers against the steering wheel, “I love this one.”

It takes all of twenty seconds before Callum is singing along. Out of tune, but not unpleasantly so. His shoulders bumping a little with the piano, “ *Let me ride through the wide open country that I love, don’t fence me in* -come on, Austin.”

“Oh, nope,” Austin shakes his head with a smile. Callum already knows he’s got no shot to get him to join in, but he’ll try.

Callum keeps singing and leans over the middle console to Austin with a wide grin, " *I want to ride to the ridge where the west commences. Gaze at the moon 'til I lose my senses.”*

The car swerves a little and Austin pushes Callum back, “Focus on the road, dummy, you know you’re not roping me into anything.”

Callum tilts his head back with a bark of a laugh before returning his eyes to the road in front of them, “Yes, Major.”

Austin sinks back into his seat with a small breath of air, and listens as Callum dutifully sings the rest of the song under his breath to the very last note. It’s so endearing, and it’s so in line with the character he’s playing. Austin briskly reminds himself that most of the time they were spending together is to benefit their performances. No matter what burning feeling he feels low in his gut when he looks at Callum, he had to remember that it didn’t mean the feeling was mutual. Even

if maybe it seemed like it was. Sometimes. Callum's actions were a study in John Egan's handbook. Austin's were in Gale's.

One would be so curious to wonder if Gale Cleven felt even half of what Austin felt for Callum for Egan. Hopefully he did, because Austin was sure it was written all over his face every time the camera rolled.

They pull off the main road at some point to stretch their legs, but mostly to let Golo romp around in a field for a few minutes before they're back on route. Austin pieces together that they're headed towards Wales and not long after is he greeted with a brown 'Welcome to Wales!' sign to confirm his theory. That doesn't do much to clue him in any further, though. Austin's knowledge of the UK's geography was minimal. He gathered that it was somewhere Callum didn't need a map for, since Austin didn't catch him looking at directions on his phone once.

Around eleven, they reach a small village, and Callum suggests they stop for an early lunch. Austin agrees, mostly because his day was at Callum's mercy. He wasn't sure where they were going, how much time they should allot for things, he was free of knowing for the time being. Austin found he liked it quite a bit.

"Is there a real destination or are you just driving me around in circles until I wise up?" Austin asks jokingly between bites of the salad he ordered.

Callum clicks his tongue and waves half of his sandwich at him, "Wouldn't you like to know."

Golo is tucked under the table beneath them, his weight on Austin's feet, and he doesn't mind it one bit.

They had found a cafe with outdoor seating, and the sun was starting to burn off the high clouds above, which made everything vibrant and green. Despite being in a car for more than four hours, Austin was feeling refreshed. He loved his job, but it was still work, and it was nice to have a break. It was nice to be able to spend it with Callum.

"Truth is, I didn't think you'd say yes," Callum admits.

Austin smirks, "So you *don't* know where we're going, is that what you're telling me?"

"No, no, I know exactly where we're going," Callum laughs and kicks at Austin's trapped shin gently below the table, "I'm just…glad you

came along, s'all."

"Well, I like hanging out with you, Cal. You're good company," Austin says, not missing the colour bloom in Callum's cheeks as he ducks his head. The day was getting warmer and he was still wearing a sweater, so it could easily be chalked up to the temperature. Austin often noticed how sensitive Callum's skin was, the patches of red that made their way up his neck when the lights on set got too warm. This was probably just another instance of that.

Callum promises it's not much further once they wrap up with lunch and buy some snacks at a Tesco before loading up in the car once again.

Austin's buzzing now with unexpended energy. The roads soon become smaller and the scenery gives way to the nearby coastline. The glimpses he catches of the ocean through breaks in the bushes and hills make Austin feel like an excited little kid.

It comes and goes as the road bends away and back again, until eventually they're pulling into a small bumpy parking lot. There's not many vehicles, despite the beautiful day it was turning out to be, and when they step out of the car the smell of the ocean and the sweet sunshine mingle to make Austin grin as he sheds his sweater, tying it around his waist.

"Here we are," Callum announces as he puts his sunglasses on, starting to grab a couple things out of the back of the car, "Well. Almost, you don't mind walking a bit do ya?"

Austin shakes his head, that sounded like exactly what he needed. He walks a little way from the car to look at the land around them, the gentle curves of green and the sound of distant waves. It was stunning.

When Callum joins him, he's got a backpack slung over one of his shoulders, Golo trotting steadfast at his size.

"Come on then," Callum exclaims gleefully as his long strides take him further from Austin in no time at all, leaving Austin to break into a light jog in order to catch up.

"Bring me all the way here and you're gonna abandon me in the parking lot," Austin chides with no heat.

"What?" Callum puts a hand over his heart and gasps, "I'd never leave

you."

Austin laughs and bumps his shoulder against Callum's as they fall in step together, Golo bounding ahead of them and stopping every few feet to sniff at something new and exciting.

It's easy and companionable, and Austin doesn't even feel guilty for not spending the day pouring over the same script he's been buried in for months. If anything, it felt like he was doing the most he could for the show by bonding more with Callum this way. A double edged sword, to be indulging dangerous feelings but simultaneously serving his own interests in furthering his performance. He couldn't feel too guilty, though. Callum had to be garnering the same benefits on the latter side of things.

They talk about the show and their costars, they talk about dream projects and the things that ignite the fire in them, the passion they have for the screen and the life they're living. Through it all, Austin wonders absently to himself how their lives might look in a few years. Masters of the Air was supposed to be a big project for all of them, Austin feels like he was finally on the trajectory he wanted, and he's sure Callum would continue his rise as well. If it did keep going that way, going out like this and keeping things low-key might be a wistful memory for him in the near future.

Right now, he was more than happy to follow Callum's lead in this green patch of Wales that Austin hadn't known existed before today, and not think about what was to come. Best not to.

They come to a rise in the landscape, and it gives way to a view of rocky cliffs and an expanse of beach below them. The sand is bright and Austin takes a few seconds as his eyes adjust to the contrast, and then they're making their way down towards it. It's blissfully empty. Golo reaches the sand before them and gallops off, slowing down only when Callum whistles at him.

"He loves it here," Callum laughs, stopping where the rocks meet the sand to take off his shoes and socks.

"I can see why," Austin says as he follows suit, tying the laces of his shoes together and slinging them over his shoulder, "It's beautiful."

"And! I even brought us some cards," Callum tempts Austin as his feet sink into the sand.

Austin quickly learns that's not all that Callum brought along in his

backpack. He's got a large blanket, which they spread out on the warm sand. Callum puts his bag on one corner to anchor it down—there's no wind in the moment, but you never know by the sea. Callum pulls out the rest of the bags contents, cold drinks and snacks. Sunscreen. Even a book, "You know. If you get bored of me," Callum says. Austin doesn't say how that was highly unlikely.

They sit and play gin together. Golo came back to them after finding a big stick to haul over, and he gnaws at it half heartedly close by. The only other sounds that fill the air was the lull of the ocean waves and some seabirds squawking from the cliffs. It's close to perfect. Austin was glad Callum had suggested it.

"You were right, the change of scenery is nice," Austin comments partway through their game, lying on the blanket with an arm to brace him.

"Alright, isn't it?" Callum smiles, pushing his sunglasses up onto his forehead, "You know, this means when I come see you in California one day you'll have to show me around, too."

"Oh? Coming to visit, are you?" Austin raises an eyebrow over his hand of cards.

"Of course," Callum scoffs, like it's ridiculous that Austin even has to ask, "We're mates, aren't we?"

Austin sucks at his bottom lip as he looks at his cards for a beat, and he realizes the pause before answering has made Callum tellingly quiet. His blue eyes watch Austin without giving away anything.

"Yes. Yes, we're friends, right now. Obviously," Austin says belatedly.

"Right now?" Callum echoes as he squints at Austin, his expression confused, "You think we won't be friends after this."

"No! I don't think that, I mean," Austin breathes out, trying to gather his thoughts, "I don't know. Sure, we'll be friends, but how often are we really gonna see each other?"

"Friends don't have to see each other all the time," Callum says pointedly.

"I know that. I just. Sometimes things change, you know, feelings change."

Callum's finger flicks over a dogeared corner on one of his cards, and he doesn't look at Austin while he asks his next question, "Are we still just talking about being friends?"

Austin opens his mouth to say something, then closes it when the words don't come.

Callum looks at him carefully, setting down his cards and sitting up straighter as he crosses his long legs. He turns his whole body towards Austin, "Hey. Can we be adults for a second?"

"Please," Austin sighs and he sits up, abandoning his hand of cards as well.

"I like you, right?" Callum states as if it's the most obvious thing in the world, "Outside of the job. I like you."

"Well. You don't know that," Austin says with rueful smile. There was no way to know what they'd feel like outside of this, even Austin wasn't sure. This was the only way they knew each other. Sometimes playing characters so close with somebody made things feel very real, only for it to fade once a project was said and done. It wasn't uncommon. Hell, it had happened to Austin before, and he's sure it would happen again.

"You're right," Callum agrees and looks at the ocean, "I don't."

Austin nods, short. That should be the end of it.

Callum turns to Austin and he looks hopeful, "Doesn't mean we can't do anything about it presently, though. I feel these things now, you feel them, too. Christ, I assume or I hope you feel them, anyways. But we don't have to call it anything. We can just…let it be what it wants to be."

Austin hums thoughtfully, looking at the way the sun shines through the ends of Callum's hair. Was it that simple? They could let this thing between them go with no expectations, no projections for the future, no 'what if' and no 'if only'. They could have it *now* . If they wanted.

"I'm trying to like, seduce you, or whatever, you know? In case that isn't clear," Callum tries with a smile so blinding it makes Austin's heart skip a beat.

Austin lets himself relax, lets himself think less, as he smiles back, "I'm starting to see that."

Callum breathes deep, lets all the air out of his lungs before asking, “Is it working?”

Austin reaches for Callum, hand gently holding the back of his neck, eyes flicking down to Callum’s mouth, “It might be.”

“Can I kiss you?” Callum asks as he drifts further into Austin’s space.

Taking it upon himself, Austin answers without a word and presses their lips together, gently tilting his head as he catches Callum’s lips between his.

Austin is suddenly hyper aware of every single sensation, the way the ocean sounds and the sand between his toes, the way that Callum’s moustache rasps against his upper lip and under his nose, the thrum of his pulse quickening beneath his skin, ears roaring with the rush.

Callum gains more confidence and crowds into Austin so he takes up any gaping space between them. He bullys Austin backwards til he’s nearly on his back, Austin kissing up into Callum’s mouth, letting his tongue press into the sharpness of his teeth. Austin has both his hands tangled in Callum’s hair while he moves to mouth at Austin’s jaw.

“Cal,” Austin breathes, breath hitching.

Callum murmurs something unintelligible into Austin’s neck, pressing a soft kiss under his ear before coming back to slide their mouths together, a slow draw.

They lay together for awhile, beach to themselves and utterly giddy like teenagers as they laugh and talk and kiss. It feels new and exciting, and Austin realizes that maybe Callum’s feelings weren’t solely fuelled by their artistic needs. Maybe it had been silly of him to assume so.

Callum ends up reading Austin some passages of the book he brought along, and Austin lays with his head pillowed on Callum’s thigh and listens.

I teach straying from me, yet who can stray from me?

I follow you whoever you are from the present hour,

My words itch at your ears till you understand them.

I do not say these things for a dollar or to fill up the time

while I wait for a boat,

(It is you talking just as much as myself, I act as the

tongue of you,

Tied in your mouth, in mine it begins to be loosen'd)

Austin watches the curve of Callum's throat as he speaks, voice deep and reverent. The vibrations ripple through Austin's body with little delay, spreading all the way to the tips of his fingers and toes. A static pins and needles that shifts into a burning desire that he had been holding close to his chest. He lets it go now, lets the want settle into him and bloom into something all encompassing.

Eventually, they decide that they probably should head back to the car and make decisions about what their plan to get home was. They take their time, though, walking through the fields, Callum's arm slung over Austin's shoulder as he yaps on about anything. Everything. Austin soaks it all in.

Predictably, neither one wants to drive all the way back so after they grab something to eat, Austin scouts out a nice little BnB whose website says they don't need reservations, and Callum goes in to check if there's any available rooms.

Austin has Golo half in his lap when Callum comes back to the car.

"Okay. So they have got a room," Callum announces.

"Why does it sound like you've got bad news, then?"

"It's only one bed," Callum shrugs, "So we can just…keep driving, I'm sure there are other spots-"

"That's fine. I mean, I don't care, unless you you do?"

"No. What, I don't care," Callum starts to smile.

Austin laughs, "Okay, then."

"Okay."

The room is small but lovely, aged but still well taken care of. A nice rosy pink and white quilt is spread out on top of the bed, complete with too many pillows. There's even a bed in the corner for Golo who takes to it immediately, wiped out from the beach. They leave their

bags by the door and Callum's hand lands on the small of Austin's back.

"Listen, you know there's no pressure or anything, to…y'know," Callum starts.

Austin rolls his eyes and turns around in Callum's arms and kisses his mouth shut. Obviously they were going to fuck. If they got back to Callum's place at god knows what hour that evening, they still would've fucked.

"Alright. Message received," Callum says, smiling between kisses as he backs them towards the bed, "You are a man of few words, Austin, and yet-"

Callum's thigh slips between Austin's legs and Austin gasps.

"-I still know what you're thinking," Callum watches Austin's face carefully, the smile on his lips making Austin groan.

"And what am I thinking?" Austin tries not to let his voice crack, but its a fruitless endeavour.

Callum's voice is low and gravelly when it comes in Austin's ear, "You want me to suck your cock."

"Not a bad idea."

Callum pulls back, "Oi. 'Not a bad idea'? I don't get any more enthusiasm than that?"

"Shh," Austin smiles and kisses Callum again, "Just let it happen, baby. Stop making so many plans."

Austin can see Callum's brain working up a smart remark, something like *look who's talking now* , but instead he motions a zipper over his lips and goes back to sucking at Austin's neck.

Their pants and shirts are gone without discussion, discarded in mixed up piles on the floor that they'd have to figure out in the morning. Austin's hands wander blindly as they kiss each other breathless, and finally he gives in to lying on the bed behind them with Callum bracing himself over top of him.

Austin allows himself a moment to languidly drink in the sight of the other man, toned and big and totally focused on Austin. The attention

feels like a spotlight, and in the singularity of it Austin shines.

“What is it?” Callum asks as he grinds against Austin’s hip. Austin runs his hands over Callum’s thighs. He can feel that Callum’s already wet through the fabric of his boxer briefs.

“Just looking at you,” Austin admits. He takes upon himself to switch their positions, knees on either side of Callum’s hips as he bucks up into him.

Callum’s eyes are half moons as he grins crooked up at Austin, “Like what you see?”

“I do,” Austin says cooly and lets a hand press into the shape of Callum’s hard cock, bending down to lick into Callum’s mouth as he wraps his fingers around it through the fabric.

“That’s good,” Callum says quietly, breath hitching as he tries to wiggle out of his briefs, “Real good.”

Austin helps tug them off, ridding himself of his own at the same time.

“Austin, touch me. Please,” Callum begs, and Austin obliges happily as he wraps his hand around Callum’s cock with a sharp tug, skin on skin. He traps it between the weight of both of them, the whimpers coming from Callum’s mouth only serving to make Austin harder. He works at his cock with star attention, making sure that Callum is feeling his best when he flicks his thumb over the slit, his motions slow and calculated.

“Yah, you wanna come for me don’t you, Cal,” Austin breaths as he works his hand over the tip kissing Callum’s exposed chest, letting the nails of his free hand sink red marks into the pale skin over his ribs.

“Austin,” Callum whines before he comes all over their stomachs in hot spurts, his body contracting underneath Austin in waves.

“I got you,” Austin says when he kisses the sweat at Callum’s temples, his skin flushed and pink, “Got you, beautiful.”

Callum gets his chance to suck Austin off after the cloud of his orgasm starts to clear, making it fast and fervent work when he flips Austin underneath him. Holding out is impossible, and Austin doesn’t try to make a show of it. Austin cries out when he comes into the supple wet heat of Callum’s mouth, who watches him with hooded eyes as he

sucks the tip clean and swallows. It's unbearably hot, and Austin has to close his eyes for so long he thinks he might fall asleep on the backs of the pleasure that had been seeded into his body.

Their skin is tacky and gross with sweat and cum. Austin almost feels bad about the nice quilt they're laying on top of. Not nearly bad enough to move, though. He'd leave a good tip when they left.

Austin feels like he's finally catching his breath when he opens his eyes again. Callum is lying half on top of him, heavy and sated and so gorgeous. Austin lets his fingertips scratch at the base of Callum's skull, and enjoys the way he leans into the touch. He was so responsive and in tune to Austin's every move.

"I wanted this from the second I saw you," Callum murmurs as he kisses Austin's shoulder.

Austin thinks of the first day they met, not long ago and still blurred in his memory through the haze of sex and a tiredness in his bones, "Same. Couldn't get you out of my head."

"Don't get rid of me yet," Callum hums, tapping the side of Austin's head gently.

Austin closes his eyes against a smile and sighs, "Don't count on it."

The seconds span and still Austin has no desire to get up to clean off yet. His mind is going a mile a minute, thinking about the way this might affect their on screen chemistry. Would it be noticeable? Would everyone be onto them on Monday? And he wondered if they had met under any other circumstances, not playing the people they were, would they feel the same and still find themselves here? Would Callum still look at him like that or would they just be nothing more than strangers?

Don't think so hard, Austin reminds himself, *No expectations* . If this died out after they were done filming, it would be fine. They'd be fine. If it didn't, well, they'd figure it out.

Austin thinks Callum might be drifting, his eyelids seem heavy and his fingers against Austin's skin are slowing in their motion.

"Cal?" Austin checks.

Callum blinks and looks at Austin with a sleepy smile, "Hmm?"

“I didn’t tell you back on the beach,” Austin says quietly, “But I like you, too. Just so you know.”

Callum snuggles in closer, cupping Austin’s cheek before kissing him, “Well, I am glad to hear that. Sucking you off woulda been awkward if you didn’t.”

Austin grins.

End Notes

-the song callum sings along to is don't fence me in by ella fitzgerald
-the book they read on the beach is leaves of grass by walt whitman!
-title inspired by lyrics from the song halfway by atta boy
-the place in wales they go is the llŷn peninsula (I've never been, just found a pretty place on the map and went with it)

if you made it to the end and enjoyed, thanks for reading and kudos/comments are always very much appreciated! or come talk to me on tumblr @magneticghouls 🖤

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